

# **2006 U.S. EPA Community Involvement Conference and Training**

## **Concurrent Session Abstracts**

**Tuesday, June 27, 2006: 10:30 am - 12:00 noon**

### **Communicating to Groups for Community Improvement: the KELP Experience**

Presenters: Judy Willingham, Kansas State University, and Daniel Zerr, Kansas Department of Health and Environment

So you see a problem in your community and have an idea for a project to solve it. You know that your ability to make an impact will be affected by the number of people who participate. Therefore, it is important to share your concerns and ideas. That means communication—clear and concise communication that explains the issue/problem and presents solutions.

This session discusses the communication skills for the individual involved in a group situation. Basic communication practices include publicity (e.g., posters, leaflets, press releases), group organization (e.g., agenda, minutes), and outreach (e.g., mailings, newsletters). Activities relating to communication support the presentation's concepts. A Kansas State Research and Extension publication is provided to each participant. This document is available at <http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/agec2/mf2569.pdf>.

### **Enhancing Community Involvement through Effective Technical Assistance**

Presenters: Steve Garon, SRA International, and Stephanie Kavanaugh and Doug Sarno, The Perspectives Group

In the context of community involvement, technical assistance is not an end in itself, but a means to an end—enhanced community involvement. Technical assistance may prove the difference between a community that is empowered to participate in EPA's decision making process and a community that is intimidated by the prospect or is skeptical about the potential impact of its involvement. While throwing money and/or technical advisors at a community group without careful planning and oversight may be kind-hearted, it also can be shortsighted. Community groups often need assistance to get organized, and need to know how to use technical assistance effectively. For technical assistance to be effective, it needs to serve the broader community interest, not just the agenda of a single group.

This session explores the question: "What can be done to create conditions for successful technical assistance?" This session begins with a brief presentation on a recent study of Superfund technical assistance programs, which had findings that pertain to all technical assistance programs designed to assist communities to confront environmental problems. The presenters explore some of the conditions necessary for successful technical assistance and provide some suggestions for creating these conditions. They also talk about issues and challenges that need more practitioner reflection and dialogue. Participants are invited to share their experiences with technical assistance and join the presenters for a presentation and dialogue on enhancing community involvement through successful technical assistance.

## **Concurrent Session Abstracts: Tuesday, June 27, 2006: 10:30 am - 12:00 noon**

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### **Galveston Bay Area Master Naturalists: Volunteers Implementing Galveston Bay's Plan**

Presenters: Richard Benoit and Mary Jean Hayden, Galveston Bay Area Master Naturalist and Friends of Galveston Island State Park, and Julie Massey, Texas A&M Sea Grant and Texas Cooperative Extension

This presentation describes the development of the Master Naturalist program in the Galveston Bay area and offers guidance for developing or partnering with such a program. Presenters describe successful methods for educating adult volunteers, for encouraging their participation in environmental restoration and education activities, and for maintaining long-term involvement and satisfaction with the program. Participants will experience some of the hands-on learning and will understand how the “3-F’s” help keep Galveston Bay Area Master Naturalist volunteers (average age 56) active in learning, doing, and teaching. Local agencies and organizations clamor for the services of such volunteers, so presenters share hints for positioning an organization high on the preferred-partner list.

The Galveston Bay Area Master Naturalists (GBAMN) program is dedicated to developing a corps of volunteers who provide environmental stewardship and educate others about the values, uses, and preservation of the area's natural resources. Candidates participate in more than 40 hours of classroom and field training conducted by local experts, which is integrated with plenty of fun, food, and fellowship. To gain certification and annual re-certification, volunteers contribute a minimum of 40 hours of service and attend eight hours of advanced training. In four short years, 85 GBAMN volunteers have contributed 65,298 hours of service and educated 109,851 individuals. As an organization and through partnerships with government agencies, universities, non-profit organizations, and private industry, volunteers help restore wetlands, prairies and marshes, monitor wildlife and water quality, man nature centers, guide field trips, and conduct programs for teachers, students, and adults.

### **Ozone Outreach and Awareness: Utilizing Paid Media, Outreach, and Research to Change Behavior**

Presenters: Sara O'Keefe and Sarah Schmitz, Regional Air Quality Council

For the first time, the Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC)—the lead air quality planning agency for the Denver-metropolitan region—secured local, state, and federal funding totaling \$950,000 to plan, develop, and implement a large-scale ozone outreach and education program. The main objective of the program is to educate citizens about ozone pollution so they can make better decisions in their daily lives to help mitigate uncontrolled emissions.

The RAQC was able to enlist the help of professional advertising, public relations, and public opinion research firms to assist with its development and implementation efforts. The result is a comprehensive program that utilizes paid advertising, public and media relations, public outreach and community events, and research to fully educate and engage citizens in a call to action to reduce ground-level ozone pollution.

This fun, informational, and engaging presentation walks participants through the planning, development, and implementation phases of public involvement campaigns. Presenters discuss the importance of combining advertising, outreach, and research (on any budget) to ensure the messages for behavior change and education/awareness campaigns are being heard through a number of

## **Concurrent Session Abstracts: Tuesday, June 27, 2006: 10:30 am - 12:00 noon**

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communication avenues. It also discusses the people and organizations that are important to include. Although the RAQC's program is an air quality campaign, the lessons learned and key learning objectives can be used to develop a program for any environmental media, such as air or water.

### **Partnership Strategies Used to Rebuild a Community**

Presenters: Karen Sprayberry and Nancy Whittle, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, and Louisiana Wright, Graniteville Community Coalition

This session describes how one community and its leaders collaborated to form a partnership to revitalize their community after a tragic train wreck caused a chlorine gas leak. In the wee hours of January 6, 2005, a Norfolk Southern train hit parked rail cars outside the Avondale Mills complex in downtown Graniteville, a community of more than 5,000 people. One of the rail cars leaked an estimated 60 tons of chlorine gas, which spread rapidly into the community. As a result, nine people died, more than 500 sought medical attention at area hospitals and physicians offices, and approximately 5,000 individuals were evacuated for up to 10 days.

Beginning in February, leaders from local churches, the local school district, academia, and other interested parties formed the Graniteville Community Coalition, a community action group that met regularly with regulatory staff from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control for updates on current actions being taken in the community and discussions about environmental and health concerns from citizens. Come to this session to hear about the activities the Coalition has sponsored and see for yourself that partnering really can make a difference. You will even get to hear a song of remembrance written by a community leader.

### **Restoring and Protecting Watersheds Through College Campus-Community Partnerships**

Presenters: Jean Gleichsner and Bob Stephenson, Fort Hays State University, and Christopher Lavergne, Kansas Waterlink

The Kansas Department of Health & Environment partnered with Kansas State University and the Kansas Campus Compact to develop an EPA 319-funded project, which engages two- and four-year colleges in Kansas in watershed restoration and protection activities through service learning, an instructional method used to enhance the teaching and learning experience. Students learn and develop skills through actively participating in the planning, coordination, and execution of a service to the community. Examples of projects include developing educational materials for producers and landowners on reducing surface water contamination, stream testing, conducting community water education fairs, watershed modeling, stream bank stabilizations, and riparian buffer strip establishments. This presentation showcases projects and includes an interactive segment where participants can brainstorm potential opportunities to engage local college campuses in environmental conservation and protection efforts.

### **Salt Creek: A Community in Transition**

Presenters: Amy MacDonald, Environmental Careers Organization (ECO), Nadine Triste, Salt Creek Neighborhood Association, and Michael Wenstrom, U.S. EPA Region 8

Pueblo County is located 100 miles south of Denver with a population of about 140,000 and is economically stagnant. Salt Creek, a Latino neighborhood adjacent to the City of Pueblo, settled in the late 1800s, is the oldest community in Pueblo. There are six mini-communities within this one

## **Concurrent Session Abstracts: Tuesday, June 27, 2006: 1:15 - 2:45 pm**

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neighborhood. Historically, there has been an active distrust among residents of “outsiders,” whether from government agencies or businesses. There had been minimal community involvement in governmental processes and little organized activity within the community.

EPA’s Environmental Justice Program began working with Salt Creek in 2001 to assist with environmental challenges. An EPA Collaborative Problem Solving grant was awarded to the community in 2004. The community is now talking and working together, and becoming increasingly aware of the challenges related to environmental contamination and the associated health issues.

Recently, the neighborhood came together to identify trash in the neighborhood as a high priority. Salt Creek had accumulated tons of trash on private properties and open lots. The community was provided assistance to conduct a neighborhood cleanup. Tons of trash and hundreds of tires were removed in a pride-building and environmentally positive community action.

This presentation focuses on how a disempowered community can be successfully organized and mobilized for effective action. Six specific steps employed in the community are identified and ways to use these steps in other communities are presented.

## **Tuesday, June 27, 2006: 1:15 pm - 2:45 pm**

### **Deliberation and Community Involvement: from Education to Decision**

Presenter: Kay Haaland, Washington State University

Making decisions about how to deal with an environmental problem like non-point water pollution or air pollution is difficult. Different people see the issue in different ways and their various proposals for action may contradict or conflict with one another. While it is not necessary for a community to come to full agreement, citizens can reach a point where they have a common understanding of the issue and a shared sense of direction for moving ahead. This includes what they are willing and not willing to do to support a government or private intervention to improve the situation.

During this session, participants learn how the National Issues Forum deliberation model was adapted in two communities to deal with environmental issues: non-point pollution in Delaware’s inland bays and smog in Central Ohio. How these issues moved from threat to public policy recommendations by using this community involvement technique are examined. Participants have the opportunity to practice a technique known as “issue framing,” which organizes an issue into manageable parts for education and deliberation of options and strategies to improve the situation, arguments against such actions, and potential costs and consequences. It incorporates scientific information as well as local knowledge and community values. It also can be used by an agency to work through and better understand an issue before taking it public.

**Encouraging Involvement by Low Income/Minority Communities in Environmental Decision Making**

Presenter: Daniel Spies, Marquette University

The essential requirement of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Smart Growth Planning Law is the involvement of the public in every aspect of its planning and implementation. With the January 2010 deadline for compliance on the horizon, many municipalities have little knowledge or experience on how to actively engage their communities. In addition, communities most affected by the eventual planning documents that will govern land use, low income housing, and a variety of siting and environmental issues are unaware they have a significant voice in the process. This presentation is designed to inform and educate public officials, community organizers, civic groups, non-profits, expert consultants, process facilitators and mediators on the main elements of the Smart Growth Law. It also presents how to engage communities to provide for more just, durable, and equitable forward planning.

**Enlibra: Effective Problem-Solving Framework Promoting Stewardship and Sustainable Growth**

Presenters: Brad Barber, The Oquirrh Institute, and Caron Kloser, HNTB Corporation

The Oquirrh Institute created the eight Enlibra Principles as a way to offer an approach to managing the environment that recognizes its complexities, and provide a model of environmental progress based on citizen participation and commitment. This session introduces participants to the eight Enlibra Principles and case studies where the Enlibra Principles have been applied and implemented. It focuses on three of the Enlibra Principles: Collaboration, Markets Before Mandates, and National Standards/Neighborhood Solutions.

This session also demonstrates how the Enlibra approach was developed, why it has merit, and how it can be effective in environmental problem solving. Case studies that have applied the Enlibra Principles are reviewed to better illustrate the value of the principles to local government organizations, and other institutions. Tools used to implement the Enlibra Principles and ways to employ collaborative approaches to planning and decision making using a step-by-step approach are discussed.

**Ozone Early Action Compacts: A Voluntary, Community-Based Program**

Presenters: David Balfour, URS Corporation, David Cole, U.S. EPA/Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, William Gill, Capital Area Council of Governments, and Cathy Stephens, Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (Austin, TX)

EPA is working with 29 communities around the country to achieve clean air as soon as possible. In December 2002, these communities voluntarily entered into Early Action Compacts with EPA. The purpose of these agreements is to reduce ground-level ozone pollution earlier than required by the Clean Air Act. These communities submitted air quality plans to demonstrate their compliance with the ozone standard through locally-designed emission reduction programs by December 2007. Since 2002, EPA has collaborated with numerous stakeholders, including environmental groups, industry, metropolitan planning organizations, and state and local governments, in successfully implementing this program.

## **Concurrent Session Abstracts: Tuesday, June 27, 2006: 1:15 - 2:45 pm**

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This session focuses on one of these local Early Action Compact areas: Austin, Texas. A diverse panel of stakeholders from Austin describe how their community got involved in their Early Action Compact agreement with EPA, the process that this community used in local decision making, and some of the problems they encountered and how they addressed them.

### **Vacant Lot Reclamation: Community Tree Planting in Vacant Inner-City Lots**

Presenters: Yuri Hreshchyshyn, Erie County Work Relief Program, Beverly McLean, University at Buffalo, and Elizabeth Triggs, There is None Like You/We Care Neighborhood Community Block Club

This session focuses on lessons learned from a community environmental improvement project in the City of Buffalo, New York. This project, which was an outgrowth of the Buffalo Weed and Seed Program (a Department of Justice funded community-crime prevention program), facilitated the formation of a joint East Side-West Side community environmental reclamation project. Through the joint Eastside-Westside steering committee, residents from racially diverse communities began to learn about each other's neighborhoods and discover mutual concerns and issues, such as the environmental consequences of housing abandonment, housing demolition, and unattended vacant lots.

The project's scope was an environmental education awareness program for inner-city minority residents to improve their neighborhood environments through tree planting in community green spaces and curb areas to promote sustainable tree management and crime prevention. The project introduced environmental design principles to block clubs, which enabled these clubs to use natural resources to recapture a sense of community pride in their neighborhood through tree planting.

During this session, presenters discuss the lessons learned from the community organizing and outreach process for community tree planting, training block clubs on urban forestry principles consistent with environmental design for crime prevention with particular attention to tree selection/species, tree planting and tree maintenance training, and the community youth urban forestry curriculum. A PowerPoint presentation provides an overview of the tree planting effort and the urban forestry curriculum. A slide show and video clips show the capacity building lessons from environmental collaboration across racial diverse neighborhoods.

### **Volunteers for America: Protecting Drinking Water Community by Community**

Presenters: Marjorie Copeland, U.S. EPA, and Howard Fielding and Micaela Marchand, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality

This session presents a case study of committee action group that participated in the Louisiana Source Water Protection Program, a community-based program designed to assist communities in protecting their drinking water sources. A prior program provided a review of susceptibility to contamination for all of the water systems in the state. Initially, the state visited water system personnel and local officials to explain an approach for their parish. Then a public education campaign with presentations at local schools and organizations was held along with a media blitz. This resulted in a large turnout at a parish community meeting. The community meeting consisted of educating citizens as to where their drinking water comes from, why it is important to protect it, and how they can protect it. Volunteers were solicited to join a parish drinking water source protection committee. Major activities that the committee accomplished included:

## **Concurrent Session Abstracts: Abstracts: Tuesday, June 27, 2006: 3:00 - 4:30 pm**

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- Visited owners of potential sources of contamination to let them know they are close to a drinking water supply and educate them on best management practices against contamination;
- Distributed materials throughout the parish that will educate fellow citizens about drinking water protection; and
- Lastly, presented a model ordinance to the local governing body which provides a lawful means of protecting the local drinking water source. Elements of the ordinance are discussed.

### **The Perfect Brew for Tribal Community Involvement: Midnite Mine, WA**

Presenters: Deb Abrahamson and Twa-le Abrahamson, Spokane Tribal Community, S.H.A.W.L. Society, Brenda Brandon, Haskell Indian Nations University, Michael Fernandez, Oregon State University, and Blase Leven, Kansas State University

Much like brewing a fine coffee or tea beverage, special ingredients and processes are required for successful community involvement at Superfund Sites. At the Midnite Mine Superfund site in northeastern Washington State, the ingredients were a few very dedicated Spokane Tribal community leaders, EPA officials, and TOSNAC/TOSC technical assistance providers that initiated and sustained the process. These individuals played many roles over time, to extract and clarify information, so that basic cultural and technical aspects were clear to all involved. This was accomplished through many hearings, meetings, training events, and exchange of written summaries. It required special tools and skills, including culturally acceptable language, graphics, and collaborative participation that fit the community's needs and tastes. Join our session and play the "Perfect Brew, the Superfund Community Involvement Outreach Game," an interactive board game about building trust and empowerment, and hear about the people, skills, and actions that fostered the right environment for communication at the Midnite Mine Superfund site.

## **Tuesday, June 27, 2006: 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm**

### **Community-Led Brownfields Partnerships**

Presenters: June Jones-Hawkins, Morris Canal Redevelopment Area Development Committee, Lenny Siegel, Center for Public Environmental Oversight, and Sarah Shipp-Parran, Committee for Economic Recovery

This panel presents, from the perspective of four communities, the lessons learned when community groups seek to play an active role in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment. The brownfields concept began as a real estate-driven approach to property remediation, but in cities across the country, community activists have sought to influence brownfields programs and projects. Since many contaminated properties tend to be located in environmental justice communities, these activists primarily represent environmental justice constituencies.

Community involvement at brownfields is extraordinarily varied. In some communities, activists try to influence government programs, such as local economic and community development offices. In others, they are primarily interested in influencing cleanup strategies or future land use on specific properties. A growing number of community groups are seeking to take the lead in local brownfields projects and act as developers.

During this session, the panelists describe how they became involved in brownfields issues, the goals of their community groups, and how they have partnered with local governments, regulator agencies,

## **Concurrent Session Abstracts: Abstracts: Tuesday, June 27, 2006: 3:00 - 4:30 pm**

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and the private sector to advance their goals. The panelists believe that effective public involvement at brownfield sites not only reduces the obstacles to cleanup and desirable reuse, but also leads to better projects; projects that both meet neighborhood needs and satisfy the objectives of private parties and government agencies.

### **Engaging the Public in Collaborative Stakeholder Processes: Resolving Gridlock in Nebraska**

Presenters: Mike Eason, Cotterell Diking & Drainage District, Mark Johnson, North Bend City Council, Dale Keyes, U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict, and Greg Michaud, Johnson, Deep & Quisenberry

Collaborative stakeholder processes are increasingly seen as effective approaches to resolving environmental conflicts. Although process participants are deeply engaged, the public at large typically is not. Traditional public involvement techniques—such as media stories, project newsletters, special website, and public meetings—attempt to keep the public informed but not necessarily engaged. A highly structured approach for analyzing project alternatives that has an explicit public input and feedback component recently has been applied in a highway alignment controversy in Nebraska. The technique involves brainstorming with the stakeholder group and surveying the public to identify issues for analyzing alternatives, and then sharing the results and selecting the most important issues through a second survey. The stakeholder group uses this information to evaluate project alternatives. This approach provides a direct role for the community at large in identifying and prioritizing issues, and understanding how each issue is impacted by the alternatives. The stakeholder group feels more fully informed about community interests and values, and can proceed with more confidence to reach agreement on a plan or set of recommendations.

During this session, the use of this approach in the US Highway 30 case is described and, through an interactive session with the audience, illustrated. A panel, including the mediator, project sponsor, and representative members of the stakeholder group, presents the US 30 application and reflects on the effectiveness of the public engagement component.

### **Georgia: Preventing Pollution One County and Watershed at a Time**

Presenter: Mitch Russell, Rivers Alive

During this session, participants learn about engaging ways to involve volunteers from their local community to their entire state using waterway clean ups as a hands-on water pollution prevention method. All of the W's are covered: why, what, who, when, and where. Topics in the presentation include:

- organizing a planning group
- creating a detailed action plan
- selecting a date
- selecting a site
- connecting with and recruiting partner organizations
- cultivating sponsors and securing donations
- disposing of trash
- publicizing event
- recruiting volunteers
- coordinating volunteers
- collecting data
- onsite reflection of accomplishments
- publicizing accomplishments
- recognizing participants
- evaluating efforts



## **Concurrent Session Abstracts: Abstracts: Tuesday, June 27, 2006: 3:00 - 4:30 pm**

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This session is fun, interactive and educational, so be sure to dress comfortably and be prepared to laugh as you learn.

### **Growing Together: A Film Tool for Consensus On Smart Growth**

Presenters: Jack Kartez, EPA New England (EPA Region 1) Environmental Finance Center, and Melissa Paly, Cross Current Productions

Smart growth is a top priority for EPA New England (EPA Region 1) as it is in other parts of the nation. But too many potentially beneficial projects never see the light of day because they become mired in community conflict characterized by distrust and accusation. In this atmosphere, even projects aimed at enhancing community values cannot win approval. Now a new film commissioned by the New England Environmental Finance Center (NE/EFC) provides encouragement to and guidance for communities that are experiencing these challenges. “Growing Together: Consensus-Building, Smart Growth and Community Change” offers an alternative to the discord and stalemate that too often occurs over local growth issues—an alternative approach called consensus building. Speaking in their own words, local municipal officials, concerned citizens, and developers of smart growth and community revitalization projects discuss how difficult issues can be approached more collaboratively to find successful paths for change. Along with members of the NE/EFC, MIT professor Lawrence Susskind lays out key steps in a more productive, interest-based consensus approach. Then the film allows the viewer to see these principles in action in four case studies that examine both failure and success in Vermont, Maine, Connecticut and Massachusetts. Visually engaging, this 50 minute film by producer/director Melissa Paly includes honest and revealing accounts by local officials, developers, conservationists and others about the challenges to and potential for reaching productive outcomes and beneficial change. The film is designed as a working tool to help spur such conversations in any community.

### **Implementing Solutions/Reducing Environmental Risks through CARE Level II Projects**

Presenters: Marva King and Henry (Hank) Topper, U.S. EPA HQ, Jill Montgomery, Muskegon County Environmental Coordinating Council, Michael Piscitelli, City of New Haven, John Perrecone, U.S. EPA Region 5, and Marybeth Smuts, U.S. EPA Region 1

In 2005, the EPA’s innovative new CARE (Community Action for a Renewed Environment) program awarded Level II cooperative agreement grants to communities ready to begin implementing risk reduction actions. The session begins with a brief introduction by the CARE program co-chair regarding the overall progress of the 2005 Level II projects. Then CARE community project leaders from New Haven, CT and Muskegon, MI highlight the work they are conducting in reducing risk in their community.

Each community leader presents a brief profile of their community, its characteristics and its demographics. The profile includes a description of priority environmental issues/risks that emerged from their assessment process. Both community leaders outline the process used in their community to select the most appropriate actions, and discuss progress to date in implementing those actions, and the results they expect to achieve (or have achieved). Each presentation includes a discussion of the value-added of a collaborative, community-based approach. In addition, each community’s EPA Project Officer discusses the benefits of the project to EPA, and the role EPA plays in the partnership.

## **Concurrent Session Abstracts: Abstracts: Tuesday, June 27, 2006: 3:00 - 4:30 pm**

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The moderator facilitates a brainstorming session where audience members will suggest a range of actions to address each community's issues/risks. The brainstorming session is followed by a brief dialogue about actions that are most likely to succeed and why. The dialogue covers ways to help sustain these projects and possible next steps for each community.

### **Public Deliberation: Navigating Opportunities and Methodological Design**

Presenter: Lars Hasselblad Torres, AmericaSpeaks

Traditional approaches to public involvement have been one-way information exchange models of public communication, for example public hearings. In recent years "information processing" approaches have evolved that foster active, two-way dialogue between citizens and government. There are several presumed benefits to public deliberation, among them citizen education, conflict prevention, and improved information outcomes. When implemented effectively public deliberation can lead to greater community consensus, often speeding actions and lowering costs because there are fewer public efforts to use legal proceedings to thwart programs and initiatives.

Today's evolving frameworks for public involvement emphasize four "levels" of engagement—inform, consult, involve and collaborate—with citizens through a range of techniques that vary in scale and complexity. These techniques, online and face-to-face, are being used with increasing frequency in local and state government, with some experimentation at the federal level. At the same time, there remain institutional barriers to effectively bringing these techniques into the agenda-setting, policy analysis, design, and evaluation activities of federal agencies. Faced with growing evidence that frequently relied upon methods, such as the public hearing, routinely fail to draw in and adequately represent citizens, public deliberation offers administrators a new set of techniques to work differently with the public.

This session presents the basics of an operational framework for choosing deliberative methods that address routine public involvement needs of agencies. Participants can draw from their own experiences to strengthen the framework and form the nexus of a deliberation learning community.

### **Risk Communication and Community Involvement at NASA's JPL CERCLA Site**

Presenters: Merrilee Fellows, NASA, and Susan Santos, Focus Group

Common waste disposal practices of more than 50 years ago eventually resulted in unacceptable levels of chemicals in groundwater within the aquifer hundreds of feet beneath NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and beneath adjacent areas. Recently NASA began a CERCLA cleanup process accompanied by a comprehensive public outreach campaign. This presentation examines how that outreach campaign utilizes "risk communication" principles to foster public understanding of the technical aspects of the cleanup, addresses community health concerns of the citizenry, and encourages public involvement in the cleanup process. The following topics are addressed:

- the rationale behind risk communication and how the best techniques and vehicles for outreach were selected;
- the level of public involvement gained and the philosophy behind what has become an extremely proactive outreach effort;
- the vehicles used to listen and respond to the public on this issue;
- the comprehensive multi-cultural outreach component of this cleanup;

## **Concurrent Session Abstracts: Wednesday, June 28, 2006: 8:30 - 10:00 am**

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- NASA's series of public meetings on the cleanup, including its "Community Meeting on Health" and a "Community Information Session;"
- the preparation of NASA's comprehensive Community Involvement Plan;
- the print materials, including a series of NASA newsletters on the cleanup;
- the information-filled NASA Water Cleanup web site; and
- some of the "risk communication" training that the speakers were provided in advance of public meetings.

### **Wednesday, June 28, 2006: 8:30 am - 10:00 am**

#### **Clearing the Air: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Engaging a Limited English Speaking Population in Addressing Urban Air Quality**

Presenters: Alan Lee, International District Housing Alliance, and Gail Sandlin, University of Washington

This session encourages a multi-disciplinary approach to engaging communities, and offers interactive activities to develop culturally competent skills in partnering with community organizations and other government or academic departments. The International District Housing Alliance (IDHA) is a Seattle neighborhood that is surrounded by three major highways, port and train shipping traffic, and city bus throughways. These and other urban development concerns adversely affect air quality in the neighborhood, which is comprised of vulnerable populations-elderly and low-income individuals, a very high percentage of whom are limited English speaking. Doctoral candidates Gail Sandlin and Alon Bassok have been working closely with the IDHA to address the community's air quality concerns. Although neither are environmental activists, they have been working with community members to examine the intersection of urban planning, environmental, and public health issues. Through this partnership, the IDHA has leveraged a plethora of resources from a variety of disciplines. Through a multi-disciplinary approach, community members will work to identify potential sources of air pollution, with coalition partners working together to advocate for stronger monitoring of air quality.

#### **Demystifying Outreach to Reservation Communities: Communication Processes and Decision Making in Tribal/Rural Communities**

Presenters: Dexter Albert and Susan Springer, Intrinsic Consulting, LLC

This presentation shares examples of the panelists' efforts interacting with rural and reservation communities. The presentation incorporates helpful information and tools practitioners can use to enhance community involvement, and shares successful approaches and lessons learned. It also brings people together with diverse perspectives via interactive exercises and group discussions about the given topic.

By means of the panelists' experience reaching out to underrepresented communities in northern Arizona and southern Utah, Intrinsic Consulting, LLC (a Native-American and woman-owned public involvement firm), offers helpful approaches, strategies and tools to working with rural, reservation, and indigenous communities throughout the United States. Participants will walk away with practical, hands-on ideas and suggestions about how to work with Native American and rural communities, while adhering to principled public involvement practices.

## **Concurrent Session Abstracts: Wednesday, June 28, 2006: 8:30 - 10:00 am**

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This presentation focuses on what connects people when culture and successful public involvement practices converge. The session's approach is to provide a brief PowerPoint presentation, followed by hands-on exercises and practical advice about connecting to and working with rural and Native American audiences. The objectives of the presentation are:

- To share tactics for successful communications between agency representatives and tribal officials using the knowledge and understanding of cultural/historical contexts;
- To convey how practitioners can adapt their methods/styles when working with Native American and rural cultures; and
- To share tips and advice on working successfully with Native American and rural audiences.

### **Finding Your Niche: Successful Outreach in a Belt-Tightening Era**

Presenter: Nanette Holland, Tampa Bay Estuary Program

Environmental education specialists face increasing budget constraints as well as growing pressure to show quantifiable results from education programs. This presentation explores ways to develop successful outreach programs on a limited budget by finding the right niche for your organization, maximizing partnerships for specific projects, and utilizing a diverse array of cost effective techniques, from postcards to podcasts. Participants learn how to develop and stick to a communications strategy that focuses their energies and expenditures; how to identify and reach target audiences; and how to make the most of existing materials and programs through creative "re-packaging."

### **FREE Education, Tools and Assistance for Communities with Brownfield Sites**

Presenters: Terrie Boguski, Kansas State University, Beth Grigsby, ATC Associates and Ann Vega, U.S. EPA

During the first part of this session, speakers provide an overview of the Technical Assistance to Brownfields communities (TAB) program, a web-based tool called TAB EZ, and a second web-based tool called Sustainable Management Approaches and Revitalization Tools - electronic (SMARTe). During the second part, participants congregate at six computer stations and use the two web-based tools with assistance from presenters.

TAB is a national EPA funded university-based program to provide training and technical assistance to cities, non-profits, and others who are interested in redeveloping brownfields. The TAB program brings unique university educational and technical resources to communities with brownfield sites. Services are tailored to the specific needs of each community.

TAB E-Z AP is an online tool developed to increase local governments/communities accessibility to EPA Brownfield Assessment Grants. This online tool simplifies and provides more accessibility to the EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant application process. Through an interactive and instructional "online interview," users enter their proposal information directly into the website. TAB E-Z AP can be found at [www.mhsrc.org](http://www.mhsrc.org)—just select "Pilot Software for EPA Brownfields Assessment Proposal application".

SMARTe is a comprehensive, web-based decision support tool that provides information, resources, links, best practices, and several analysis tools and templates for various aspects of revitalization

## **Concurrent Session Abstracts: Wednesday, June 28, 2006: 8:30 - 10:00 am**

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such as: developing a vision, techniques for involving the public in decisions, environmental assessment and remediation, and sources of money. SMARTe can be found at: [www.smarte.org](http://www.smarte.org)

### **Logic Modeling: Enhancing Project Planning and Performance**

Presenters: Douglas Eller, Grace Hill Settlement House, and Michelle Mandolia, U.S. EPA

This session is intended for an audience that is new to the concept of logic modeling. The purpose of this session is to present logic modeling as a useful first step in planning for project performance and defining key project objectives to track. The session includes an introduction to logic modeling, including definitions, development process, and typical formats; various uses of the logic model tool; and a case study example of how EPA's innovative new CARE program (Community Action for a Renewed Environment) used a logic model to develop its program-level performance measures. Participants participate in exercises to familiarize them with the concepts. The CARE community project leader from St. Louis, MO shares his experience developing a logic model as part of the cooperative agreement project planning process. Open dialogue and discussion are encouraged throughout the session.

### **Marketing the Message in Libby**

Presenters: Peggy Churchill and Ted Linnert, U.S. EPA Region 8, and Karen Ekstrom, CDM Corporation

When simply targeting your audience isn't enough, you've got to pull the trigger.....

As the release of the Proposed Plan for the nation's highest profile Superfund Site draws near, the Libby Asbestos Project Team realized it had to do more than capture and hold the attention of the community—it had to aggressively sell its message and the community had to buy it. EPA and its contractor (CDM), developed a unique marketing-style community involvement (CI) campaign, dubbed “The Year of Community Involvement,” designed to supplement the site's already robust CI program. The campaign had to set the stage for the publication of EPA's Baseline Risk Assessment and RI/FS as well as the Proposed Plan and ROD—all considered highly controversial documents by local and national stakeholders.

EPA and CDM created a “big picture” approach identifying short- and long-term CI goals, as well as steps for achieving these goals and measuring their success. Departing from convention, it was stressed that everyone on the project team, from administrative support personnel to contractors and EPA Project Managers, had a role to play in educating the community and building trust. Team members were carefully introduced to primary messages to ensure they were comfortable with and understood their role in the process. The various techniques implemented by this assertive and comprehensive marketing campaign to plant these messages, measure the success of their roll out, and provide feedback for future CI efforts are revealed in this presentation—at no cost whatsoever to the audience!

## **Concurrent Session Abstracts: Wednesday, June 28, 2006: 1:00 - 2:30 pm**

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### **Neighborhood Water Stewardship Program: A Case Study in Behavior Change**

Presenters: Elenor Hodges, Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment, and Aileen Winquist, Arlington County

The Neighborhood Water Stewardship Program goes beyond many environmental education programs to help residents learn new behaviors that prevent water pollution. The program is a partnership of a non-profit organization, Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment, and three localities in Northern Virginia (near Washington, DC). To become water stewards, volunteer team leaders create neighborhood-based teams that learn about preventing water pollution.

Each team is made up of five to eight households and meets five times over a three-month period. With the help of a workbook and a trained coach, the teams choose from a series of practical actions to reduce non-point source pollution. The actions are written in a simple format and designed not to overwhelm participants, even someone very new to the concepts. There are three categories of actions: actions to protect water quality, actions to conserve water, and actions to expand involvement to the local government and community. Sample actions include cleaning up after your dog, fixing oil leaks on your vehicle, reducing use of fertilizers/pesticides on your yard or garden, creating a rain garden, and reducing paved surfaces around your home.

A critical component of the program is information tracking. Team members complete a “before” and “after” assessment form, which allows program managers to track which actions team members have adopted and calculate the environmental benefits of those actions, and the overall program.

## **Wednesday, June 28, 2006: 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm**

### **Casa de Salud: Engaging Community for Healthy Homes**

Presenters: Doris Anziani, Family Service, Inc., and Gretchen Latowsky, JSI Center for Environmental Health Studies

In Lawrence, Massachusetts, partners of Casa de Salud have created a highly successful program to address indoor air issues by hiring and training neighborhood residents to conduct outreach and education among a largely immigrant Latino population. The project is creating opportunities to engage Latino residents in neighborhood discussions regarding indoor air issues, such as mold, pesticide use, household cleaning chemicals, ritualistic use of mercury, and lead paint, that affect the health of children and families. Neighborhood and home-based meetings, or charlas, inform citizens about environmental health issues while drawing on the knowledge, experience, and concerns of the community. Residents are given an opportunity to learn in a culturally and linguistically appropriate setting where neighborhood culture is dominant and known and trusted neighbors serve as peer educators. Environmental health experts and local officials attending charlas are given an opportunity to learn about environmental health issues through the knowledge and experience of affected residents who experience environmental exposures in the context of their own lives. This session invites participants to attend a charla, and engage in role-playing and open discussion while exploring ways in which the Casa de Salud model may be modified and transferred in a culturally appropriate way to other immigrant resident and worker populations.

**Changing Public Behavior with Help from Target Audience Research**

Presenter: Elaine Andrews, University of Wisconsin

When planning a community involvement initiative, the planning group starts with a rough idea of what to do and how to do it. Once you have the beginning of a plan, the next step is to familiarize yourself with the “community of interest” and identify one or more target audiences. Who, specifically, can be part of making your goal happen? A focus on a target audience is essential to success, according to research evaluating effectiveness of outreach programs and campaigns. Once identified, members of the target audience can be involved in every step of the planning process.

This session engages participants in considering what target audience details are significant for their community initiative, how to gather the details, and where to use this information in planning. Resources for the session feature findings from the Water Outreach meta-analysis of 96 research studies about 14 audiences of interest to water-related initiatives. Other resources include: a “behavior change analysis” worksheet; a list of the types of information you need to know about a target audience, referencing parameters identified as relevant by researchers; and low-cost tools for learning about a target audience. Participants will be able to access these resources and other outreach, planning, and facilitation tools after the conference through the Water Outreach website, <http://wateroutreach.uwex.edu/>.

**Friendraising = Fundraising: Nurturing Stakeholder Relationships to Meet Fundraising Goals**

Presenters: Karen Fligger and Timothy Jones, U.S. EPA, Kathy Klein, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, and Gayle Mariner-Smith, Ecovision Inc.

There’s an old adage that applies to successful watershed protection: “put your money where your mouth is!” This ground-breaking panel demonstrates fund-raising techniques that engage community members in a way that is directly linked to environmental improvement. In increasingly difficult economic times, participants learn how strong community involvement leads to effective fund-raising and environmental results.

The EPA’s Office of Water reveals how the 28 community-based National Estuary Programs have raised approximately \$10 for every \$1 dollar of base funding and achieved substantial environmental results through effective public involvement. The Peconic Estuary Program demonstrates how the strategic nurturing of stakeholder relationships not only builds loyal and active community partners, but also helps you to reach your fund-raising/friend-raising goals. Participants go through a fun mini-training session on one of the most important yet difficult aspects of closing a friend-raising deal - “The Ask.”

The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary shares several of their creative fund-raising initiatives, including their annual Experience the Estuary Celebration and Corporate Environmental Stewardship Program. These examples illustrate how establishing up-front win/win partnerships with community funders will position your organization to reap positive returns for many years to come. Finally, several free on-line tools and resources that can help participants translate community involvement efforts into successful fund-raising strategies are introduced. Participants are invited to share their fund-raising experiences and will come away with invaluable tools for their own fund-raising/friend-raising efforts.

**Identifying Environmental Pollutants, Setting Priorities, and Building Partnerships through CARE**

Presenters: Mary Jo Bragan, Marva King and Perry Pandya, U.S. EPA, Sean Jacobs, Clean Air Council, and Karen Thompkins, DeKalb County Board of Health

Communities and EPA are now working together to implement the new CARE (Community Action for a Renewed Environment) Program. CARE was designed by EPA to help communities work at the local level to understand and reduce risks from multiple sources of toxics and environmental pollutants. This session highlights progress of the CARE projects to date, including formation of collaborative partnerships, and provides an interactive review of the work of two key CARE Level I communities. During this session, CARE project leaders profile their community and its characteristics and demographics. They will describe how to identify a project; how to come to an understanding of the environmental pollutants in the community, and how to form a diverse group of stakeholders into a community-based collaborative partnership to help assess community impacts. Project leaders focus on the key decisional moments along the way that helped push the project forward and discuss future areas of concern.

EPA project leaders discuss the commitment of the EPA region and their role in the partnership. Following presentations, this session will include an interactive discussion to:

- Assist the projects in further assessing, prioritizing, and/or considering options the community can take to reduce environmental concerns;
- Offer “tips of engagement” for including additional stakeholders into their partnership; and,
- Suggest activities/methods to increase their knowledge for environmental management techniques and community capacity building.

**Tailoring: Seaming Together Techniques to Fit a Variety of Projects**

Presenters: Paige Cureton and Ann Steedly, ARCADIS, and Clifford Kendall, Town of Farmville

What do a brownfields redevelopment project located in a Community Development Block Grant area and a highly controversial project located in a national park have in common? How did the public involvement techniques used in these projects help shape their outcomes?

Come learn as we explore the techniques used for two very different projects with diverse stakeholders. Become part of a Citizens Task Force, develop a Citizen’s Vision Survey, and participate in a Small Group Brainstorming Session. Discover how to develop a Public Involvement Plan using mass media strategies to reach local, state, and national stakeholders in a timely manner, as well as interpersonal communication techniques for one-on-one interaction. Learn how to identify the appropriate tools necessary to effectively reach the public. Discuss the importance of establishing a working partnership with a community and fostering meaningful discussions. During this session, how to incorporate public participation into the decision-making process and how to provide stakeholder feedback are discussed. This session included lecture, discussion, and role-playing exercises. Example materials are provided.



**The Big Game Management Roundtable: Wildlife Management through Collaborative Partnerships**

Presenters: Laura Applegate, Big Game Management Roundtable, and James Huckabay, Central Washington University

The Kittitas County Big Game Management Roundtable (BGMR) is a collaborative partnership of some 45 stakeholders. Kittitas County has the largest public wildlife areas and highest elk population in Washington State and county hunting-related revenues reflect both. At the same time, agriculture lands in the area are used for growing some of the highest value Timothy hay in the United States. Over the last ten years, wildlife damage in the county has expanded, provoking claims and lawsuits against the state over damage to private agricultural lands. While hunters decried “too few” elk, ranchers argued “too many” elk. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife was caught in the middle. Few, and historically unsuccessful, solutions were available for stemming the rising tide of conflict. The BGMR partnership was formed to find sustainable solutions on which all stakeholders could agree.

During this session, the BGMR panel (a graduate student, a professor, and a professional wildlife biologist) presents an overview of the BGMR’s collaborative effort to stem rising animosity among wildlife agency professionals, sportsmen, and private landowners. The BGMR panel reviews its process of choosing a collaborative process, setting goals, and refining a partnership format, which is now successfully finding and implementing solutions to wildlife damage in the valley. Participants have an opportunity to simulate the assembly of a collaborative partnership formed to manage a specific conflict and its concomitant benefits and pitfalls. Through interaction with the panel and fellow participants, individuals experience the collaborative process in action.

**Translating Risk Assessment into Action: the Detroit Experience**

Presenters: Lisa Goldstein, Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision, Jaime Julien, U.S. EPA Region 5, Margaret Sadoff, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and Kathryn Savoie, Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services

There are many examples of community-based risk reduction projects that do not require extensive data collection or study to implement. What is the added benefit of a risk assessment to risk reduction planning and implementation? How do risk assessors use data to prioritize risk reduction strategies? What is the role of the community in this process? This presentation focuses on lessons learned from Michigan's experience with the Detroit Air Toxics Initiative (DATI) from the federal, state and local perspectives.

The DATI is funded by a U.S. EPA Fiscal Year 2003 Community Assistance and Risk Reduction Grant. The DATI is the first project to include an intensive monitoring and data analysis effort to characterize potential health risks and prioritize risk reduction efforts in the Detroit metropolitan area. A large, diverse group of stakeholders consisting of representatives from environmental groups, community groups, state, federal and local government, industry, and universities assisted the MDEQ throughout this process. The findings of the risk assessment phase were released in November 2005 and identified 15 compounds of concern in the Detroit area. The risk reduction phase is ongoing and scheduled for completion by September 30, 2006.

## **Wednesday, June 28, 2006: 2:45 pm - 5:30 pm**

### **Faith-Based Approaches to Environmental Stewardship: Community Examples and Governments' Role**

Presenters: Susan Emmerich, Emmerich Environmental Consulting, Peter Fargo, U.S. EPA, and David Kern, Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality

A faith-based approach is one of the motivations for sound environmental decision making, including environmental justice, economic interest, protection of health and maintenance of a quality of life. Yet a faith-based approach has not received as much attention as have other incentives, even though many individuals, communities and institutions employ it in their choices. This presentation's primary goals are to: provide insight to regulators and community leaders about the effectiveness of a community-led and faith-based approach in changing people's attitudes toward their environment and environmental professionals; bring together panelists with experience at federal and state levels to discuss key issues and opportunities related to the implementation of faith-based environmental stewardship; and engage the audience by answering questions and entering into a dialogue about the best ways environmental professionals and government agencies can support faith-based stewardship efforts.

One panelist successfully worked in Virginia and Pennsylvania communities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to bring about a change in attitude toward conserving and away from wasting resources. Her academic research indicates the importance of environmental professionals' understanding community worldviews, including faith-based worldviews, and recognizing that these views govern values and behavior toward the environment. The panel also includes an EPA staffer involved at the national level and an Arkansas state regulator who has faced criticism from a community group rooted in local churches that believed the state did not act to protect residents from ill health effects from an industrial facility.

### **Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis Supports Community Involvement**

Presenters: Paul Burgess, University of Redlands, Carie Fox, Fox Mediation, Andrew Miller, U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center, and Philip Murphy, InfoHarvest Inc.

This advanced workshop focuses on Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA), which supports ranking of alternatives when there is: lots of data; incomplete or uncertain information; a tangle of values; and a large number of players. This session links MCDA with GIS and the web, and focuses the discussion on existing community involvement practice. Participants learn about the methodology; walk through some examples related to habitat restoration, disaster recovery, and vitamin education; and have the opportunity to design a community involvement process using MCDA or to work on a specific multi-criteria decision-making hierarchy. There is ample opportunity for Q&A, and the presenters welcome the chance to brainstorm ideas for specific applications.

For community involvement at the "inform/consent" end of the IAP2 spectrum, the most important benefit of MCDA is the utter transparency of the decision (it is the "anti-black box.") At the 'involve/empower' level, the most powerful aspect of multi-criteria decision tools is the opportunity for dialog. Some of the dialog (identifying core disputes, shifting from positions to interests, examining intended and unintended consequences) builds on existing community involvement practice. But MCDA offers something new as well: better feedback. People can try out different

## **Concurrent Session Abstracts: Thursday, June 29, 2006: 8:30 - 10:00 am**

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scenarios and see it reflected on a map. They can gut-check the connection between their interests and their preferred alternatives. The ability to “play-around” with the scenarios, the data, the probabilities, and even the weighting of the values, and to see and discuss the results, is a powerful community involvement tool.

### **Thursday, June 29, 2006: 8:30 am - 10:00 am**

#### **Community Leadership Campaigns**

Presenters: Gretchen Latowsky, JSI Center for Environmental Health Studies, Tony LoPresti, National City Asthma Committee, John Scanlon, JSEA, and Stacie Smith, Consensus Building Institute

Leaders deliver extraordinary results, far beyond what seems possible when they start. Leadership is a teachable method for bringing air toxic situations under control in your community. The local leaders presenting this session have declared bold air toxic reduction goals and enrolled others in the work of achieving the results such as reduced asthma rates, cleaner air in schools, and radon reduction. In diverse communities from Lawrence, MA, to Portland, OR, and San Diego, CA, community leaders have transformed community behavior from a focus on complexity and obstacles to one of participation and solutions. Come to this session and learn to uncover and refine your leadership voice to transform your community project into a campaign with bold goals, and move others into action. Come hear about the inspirational leadership stories of community air toxics reduction activists and learn about their techniques and how you can use them to accelerate progress and increase outcomes.

#### **From Youth to Elders: Involving Native Communities in Regional Planning**

Presenters: Heather Coulehan, Akella, Inc., Jon Isaacs and Joan Kluwe, URS Corporation

During this session, participants explore the planning and public participation processes for the recent revision of the North Slope Borough Comprehensive Plan in Alaska. This plan addressed a broad array of resource development requirements and concerns, including associated cultural change. A variety of public participation techniques were used to engage Inupiat communities, high school students, state and federal agencies, resource industry representatives, and non-profit organizations. Interactive stakeholder workshops, community meetings, and a custom curriculum for high school students were important tools for identifying key planning issues. The plan was structured to closely match these issues with goals, objectives, policy statements, and implementation responsibilities. Partnerships were emphasized for plan implementation.

This session includes small group sessions to look at examples from the plan, brainstorming, a discussion of public participation challenges and success stories, and hands-on experience with the specialized curriculum that integrated local school district goals, Alaska State Education Content Standards, No Child Left Behind Grade Level Expectations, and planning goals.

**Internet Tools to Help Citizens Find Environmental Information, Make Maps, and Predict Impacts**

Presenters: Dana Lucero and Dreux Watermolen, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Increasingly, federal, state and local governments are investing in web-based systems of data sharing, thus increasing citizens' access to information about the places where they live, work, and recreate. This phenomenon creates unprecedented opportunities for resource managers and environmental professionals to share resource information and foster an enhanced level of resource stewardship among citizens and local governments. This session introduces participants to a range of Internet tools that enable effective community participation. Specifically the session focuses on three types of free, web-based tools: tools for accessing environmental data; tools for creating customized maps; and tools for modeling potential impacts of land use changes. Participants provide input to guide the presenters through a live demonstration of an example of each kind of tool. A discussion of community applications follows each demonstration. Participants leave the session with a basic literacy of the tools demonstrated and with resources for finding Internet tools for planning, conservation, and environmental protection with application in the Midwest and nationwide.

**Successful Community Involvement at Sensitive Sites: Navigating through HOT Issues**

Presenters: Marcos Aquino and Vance Evans, U.S. EPA Region 3

The Chillum Site case study explores dynamics of addressing community involvement challenges at a complex site with many complicated issues. The site was a hotbed of volatile circumstances that were headed on a collision course towards a potential communications nightmare. Presenters discuss the use of effective tools that helped them steer through concerns, including the:

- Presence of cross-jurisdictional contamination technical complexity of addressing overlapping plumes of gasoline and perchloroethylene;
- Challenges of communicating information for concurrent EPA RCRA corrective action and Superfund removal activities;
- Complex political issues involving local and federal officials;
- Community involvement challenges of having an adversarial neighborhood group and a mixed-demographic community that had low trust/low understanding; and
- Need to provide effective outreach and technical education to residents with various levels of technical proficiency.

The presentation focuses on some of the inherent pitfalls, process issues and day to day struggles associated with working with the public at sites like this, as well as the proactive actions taken to foster productive community involvement.